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MASTITIS

THE MENACE



YOU Can Control Mastitis!

EXTENSION SERVICE
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
AND U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COOPERATING

E. F. FROLIK, DEAN

E. W. JANIKE, DIRECTOR

You Can Control Mastitis

This is the last of six circulars emphasizing control of mastitis.

Treatment of cows with mastitis is not the answer to the mastitis problem. The answer is in prevention and control.

The most important people in control and prevention of mastitis are the owners and milkers. Professional workers can help but producing high quality milk from disease-free cows is the producer's responsibility.

Review and study the previous five circulars and think seriously about the problem of mastitis in your dairy herd. Then fill in the answers to the following questions. This will help you appraise the udder health of your herd.

General

Mastitis reduces individual cow and herd production. Mastitis reduces the possible life time production. It also lowers the quality of milk marketed.

How does mastitis affect your herd?_____

What do you estimate mastitis costs you annually?_____

How many cows' quarters were lost because of mastitis?_____

How many milk cows did you sell during the year because of mastitis?_____

How many cows did you treat for mastitis?_____

How much did you spend for antibiotics?_____

How much did you pay professional workers for treating cows with mastitis?_____

How much milk was not marketed because of mastitis?_____

How long do you withhold milk from cows treated for mastitis?_____

Herd Management

There is no substitute for proper herd management. Treatment is of little benefit without proper management of the dairy herd. Cows must be properly housed and fed if they are to be comfortable.

Are your cows ever roughly handled so as to produce under stress?_____

Are your cows provided with ample bedding in months when it is needed?_____

Do you prevent udder injury by eliminating high door sills, logs or brush or old machinery in the pasture or dry lot?_____

Do you clean and disinfect all stalls after removal of infected cows?_____

Have you eliminated all low, poorly drained areas in the barnyard, lanes and pasture?_____

Are your dairy cattle fenced away from your farm pond?_____

Are you sure that purchased animals are free of infection?_____

Do you keep purchased animals away from the rest of the herd for about 30 days?_____

Does your calf-raising program protect your heifers from udder injury?_____

The Milking Machine

The milking machine is a very important part of dairy equipment. It is different from other farm machinery because it works on living tissue. For best results, the milking machine must be properly installed, maintained and operated.

Is your vacuum pump large enough to handle all the milker units and all other accessory equipment?_____

Do you lubricate and service the pump according to instructions in the operator's manual?_____

Is your vacuum controller functioning properly?_____

Do you inspect the controller and clean it when necessary?_____

Is your vacuum line of adequate size?_____

Do you know whether the pulsator on your milking machine is operating properly?_____

How often do you change teat cup liners?_____

Does the pipe carrying milk slope towards the milk receiving receptacle?_____

Have you located the small hole or air vent in the milk claw or bowl?_____

Is this hole clean so air can be admitted?_____

Milking Practices

The milking machine can be properly installed and maintained but if milking is not done correctly other factors are unimportant. Properly harvesting the milk twice daily is the most important chore the dairyman performs. It is important to take a critical look at milking practices to see that maximum milk production is secured and udder health is maintained.

How do you stimulate the let-down of milk in your herd?_____

How long after stimulation do you wait before placing milking machine on teats?_____

Do you use a strip cup?_____

What causes a cow to hold up her milk?_____

How do you remove the milking machine from the cow's udder?_____

What procedure do you follow in sanitizing the teat cups between milkings?_____

How many units are operated by one individual?_____

How long do you leave the machine on the cow's teats?_____

Do the machines creep up on the udder before being removed?_____

Do you machine strip your cows?_____

Do you follow a definite routine in milking your cows?_____

Preventing Spread of Mastitis

The germs that cause infectious mastitis can be spread from infected to non-infected cows rather easily. Bacteria found in manure, soil and water may occasionally pass through the teat opening and multiply within the udder. One of the most important phases of mastitis control is to prevent the spread of germs that cause mastitis.

If you took an inventory of your dairy set up, what practice or factor do you think might be causing mastitis to spread from one cow to another?_____

In washing and massaging cows' udders, do you use a single cloth or individual cloths or paper towels?_____

List five ways that mastitis might be spread from one cow to another cow on your farm?

1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____ 4. _____
5. _____

To prevent calves from sucking one another, what practice do you use? _____

What has been the biggest help to you in preventing and controlling mastitis? _____

Two additional bulletins recommended for further study are: Current Concepts of Bovine Mastitis—published by the National Mastitis Council, 440 East Ogden Avenue, Hinsdale, Illinois, \$1.00 per copy. Bovine Mastitis Bulletin 525, Ontario Veterinary College, Guelph, Canada. (Few copies available Dairy Extension Office, College of Agriculture, Lincoln, Nebraska.)

The subject of mastitis has been covered in six circulars. Information in the circulars has been as follows:

- EC 63-639 Mastitis and Your Dairy Herd
- EC 63-640 Preventing Mastitis by Better Herd Management
- EC 63-641 The Milking Machine and Mastitis
- EC 63-642 Preventing Mastitis with Better Milking Practices
- EC 63-643 Preventing Spread of Mastitis
- EC 63-644 You Can Control Mastitis

Prepared through the cooperation of the Nebraska Mastitis Committee, C. W. Nibler, chairman, P. H. Cole, secretary.